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On Matrimony

Every subject has its bright and dark side; and if properly examined will develope its several qualities so fully, as to enable us to form a just estimate of its merits, without much danger of being deceived in our calculations. It is not, however, one of the distinguishing characteristics of Man, to set himself about this examination.

At all times he is indolent he is unwilling, he is incapable - Owing to this want of proper discrimination, at every step he finds himself at fault and is continually falling into error, in sentiment and in practice Some minds are of a cast so gloomy, that they ~~continually~~ constantly view objects as if enveloped in the shades of darkness; and can never be induced to contemplate them in the brightness of daylight. Others are

so sanguine, as to imagine the darkness of midnight brilliant as the noon tide Sun, and the ugliness of deformity to be beautiful as the fairest specimen of natures works. We can easily imagine what errors in judgment, and conduct, must result from such mistaken insights into the nature of things, and acting coolly as Spectators, we can prescribe the remedy. We can cure the evil, but we ourselves are as subject to ~~these~~ errors as any

of our fellow Men. Could we remove the veil of prej-udice from our eyes; could we learn to form just no-tions of Men and things, and act according to the results of unbiased Reason we should have ~~reason~~ cause to consider ourselves happy in the courses we have marked out for our future pursuits -

In treating of the sub-ject of matrimony, we know not but we may fall into some of the faults we now condemn; but we claim the licence

of youth;- Time, that great corrector of Errors, may improve our knowledge and change our opinions.

Every state of life has some cares and some pleasures, peculiar to itself; and none differ more in these respects than the married and the single life, which of these open the fairest prospect of future happiness, which must give rise to the largest share of future misery.

One of the strongest objections to matrimony which presents itself to

the single Man, is that it must in a degree interfere with his liberty; he who has been taught the care of his own Person, and is in every respect master of his own time, unwillingly yields a particle of his independance to the whims & caprices of another; he is fearful of the cares of a family; he is ~~unwilling~~ loth to encounter the charges of its support— If he is ambitious of rising in professional renown, he is apprehensive lest he

should be withdrawn from the attention necessary for its attainment;- if he wishes to create a Fortune, he will remember, that the Wife is not now, as in the good old times of our Ancestors, a helpmate in every pursuit, but a drawback that often proves fatal to final success.- He will consider the situation of his married acquaintance, and draw every unfavourable precedent for his own case.- The

pleasures he is in the
habit of enjoying with
his Brother Bachelors, his
convivial hours, are to
be yielded up, and he
will say if married, "I must
"become the Slave of my
"Lady; I must give up
"my free-will to obey her;
"I who despise the round
"of fashionable follies, must
"become their advocate; I
"who think it a great
"bore to be confined to
"the insipid chat of a
"painted Belle, and detest
"the ridiculous scandal
"of the Tea table, must

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"bear an equal proportion
"of them all,- the offic-
"-ers, harmless, humble
"servant of the Sovereign
"Fair;- unnerved from
"my former vigor of
"mind, and of habit;
"broken off from the
"manly pursuits of
"my Youth;- fallen down
"perhaps to the level of the
"poor Idol of my affec-
"-tions;- I should bid adieu
"to every great and noble
"sentiment,- nor hope
"to realize the prospects
"which once opened fair
"before me;- if these are

"to be the consequences of
"married life, let me never
"think of matrimony."—
Such perhaps would be
the feelings and sentiments
of one whose affections
were disengaged, and
whose views looked up to
some lofty eminence, as
the reward of his future
exertions; and ~~perhaps~~
we may believe that his
fears of the married state
would not be entirely unfounded. But there is
another part of our species, whose feelings
and prospects demand
our attention in an

enquiry of this kind; the education, the manners, the habits, of Women, lead them to depend almost entirely upon Matrimony for their future prospects; it is in loving, and being loved, that the young female looks for happiness; it is in the protection of the man of her affections, that she expects to find respectability, domestic comfort, and all the delights of the Social Circle;-

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while she has much to hope, she has little to fear from a change of her condition; she has few seperate enjoyments to relinquish; she has little to fix her ambition, ~~which~~ that will be injured by her conjugal bonds. On the contrary she is resigning many cares annexed to single life, for the more laborious, but more gratifying, and useful burthens of a Mistress

of a Family. If power be her ruling passion she has ample range for her talents in the ~~management~~ arrangement of her household. She may exercise her ingenuity in the management of her Husband & and gratify her anger by the punishment of her domestics. In every point of view then we are ~~indined~~ to believe that Matrimony is calculated for the happiness of the fair.

We shall now take a more immediate view of the married state, and examine some of the principles, which make it ~~more~~ intimately ~~connection~~ connected with private happiness.

The union of two souls, united in sentiment, & harmonized by bonds of mutual affection, must give rise to a delicious calm of mind, to ~~feelings~~ feelings, pure and elevated, to thoughts and actions, noble and dignified.

The fatiqies of. busines, the vescations of the World, are alleviated by recourse to those who wish fuly, and relieve them. Every enjoyment is heightened by the re-collection of. those friends who partake in them; and mutual sympa-thy reigns throughout in every action of their lives. Children the pledges of. love offer a pleasing care to the affection of Parents; and their progress

the World, interests while it charms;- in old age they seem to live over their lives in their children,- their pursuits renew again the enjoyments of Youth, and still keep up an attachment to life when every other bond may have failed;- their affection hovers round the last moments of life, and supports with filial love the ~~last~~ closing scene.

The progress of af-

fection between the Individuals once united in Wedlock, is not less interesting than other facts connected with their happiness. The first ardor of love gradually gives way to the more temperate influence of Friendship; and life continues to proceed diverted of half its griefs, and shorn of its cares.

But in single life there are none but friends on whom to calculate for a participation of our grievances,

an alleviation of our cares with a heart open to the pleasures of Friendship, filled with a just sense of its merits. We cannot calculate however that a friend, occupied by their own concerns, could feel or offer a sufficient remedy to the wounded heart so readily as the Partner of the Bosom. The single man cannot look onward to old age with any satisfaction; there are none attached to him by the mysterious ties of Nature, who will watch

his declining years, smooth the pillow of sickness, and enliven the passage to the grave.

Let us now for a moment consider the effect of Matrimony upon Society. Lord Bacon says, that single men are generally most capable of performing great things, because, not having their affections otherwise engaged, they endeavour to make themselves useful to the community; but that

"Married Men make the best subjects because they have attachments, which fix them more strongly to the soil. But we perceive no reason why Matrimony should interfere with Greatness; the Married Man has every cause for exertion that can direct or influence a generous mind; he has a Partner whose situation and respectability must depend upon his exertions; he has Children who new

carry down his name to Posterity, whose rank in the world will be materially influenced by his standing & character. The single man has no temptation to make use of extraordinary exertion; his gratifications are selfish; his name & reputation will last only with himself.

Celibacy is contrary to the laws of nature; if it prevails ~~if it prevails~~ it interferes with the population of Society; and leads to

the pursuit of crimi-
nal pleasures, contrary
to every Law, Social, Moral
and Divine. The com-
munion of the Sexes
is an immutable princi-
ple of our Nature, it
must exist, if not under
one form, under another;
if not in Marriage, in
indis-criminate prosti-
tution. When morals &
manners become dissolute,
the inevitable consequence
is the down fall of Public
happiness & security. Rome
was precipitated from her
lofty eminence, by the
corruption of her inhabit-

and a similar fate awaits every Nation, whose People forgetting the virtuous maxims of their Ancestors, degenerate into the worst species of vice. We are then inevitably drawn to the conclusion, that among the blessings belonging to Society, that of Matimony is the most happy in its consequences to Individual & collective Man. To you who are already enjoying this delightful intercourse whether in the first fervor of youthful love, or in the gentle sunshine of matured enjoyment we say, live On: be sensible of the pleasures of your situation

and offer to young Love the prospect of a happiness like yours, as a reward for generous exertion. To those who like ourselves look forward to Matrimony as a scene of future enjoyment and gild with the ardor of mutual emulation, to be most worthy of the happiness to which they aspire, we add, let no temptation withdraw you from your honourable pursuits; go on improving daily in mind & in morals; trust that you will in due time reap the golden reward, the meed of merit, in mutual love, in mutual happiness, in future respectability, honour & renown

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